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Held, have despoiled Ricardo. Critics as illusive as Toynbee, as appreciative as Patten, as laborious as Bonar, have rehabilitated him. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the letters to McCulloch add little to our knowledge of the theory of value, or to our knowledge of economic theory generally. But even if they fail in this respect, they are not without a considerable interest. They afford, at any rate, an intellectual vindication of Ricardo. They show that he did not remain wholly blind to those difficulties in his theory which almost every other thinking man has seen. And this intellectual vindication of the economist is the more welcome because the letters reveal many a pleasing trait in the man. But the reader who expects from the "Letters to McCulloch" much more than this is doomed to disappointment.

Dr. Hollander's relation to the letters is twofold: he is not only the editor of them, he is also their discoverer. His editorial work is at once unobtrusive and adequate. So far as I have been able to check it, it is also accurate. But the industry and the discrimination of the editor pale before the insight and the courage of the discoverer. Not since Vinogradoff unearthed Bracton's collection of cases in 1884, has any literary explorer in a similar field conceived his task more boldly or prosecuted it more intelligently than Dr. Hollander. One can but regret that his modesty prevented him from giving a fuller account of his successful search.

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Governments and Parties in Continental Europe. By A. LAWRENCE LOWELL. Two vols. Pp. xiv, 377, and viii, 455. Price, \$5.00. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1896.

Attention should first of all be directed to the title of this work; it deals not simply with constitutions and governmental machinery, but also with political parties, "which furnish the main motive power in public life." Nearly all treatises on government are deficient on this side; many pay practically no attention whatever to it; not, perhaps, because writers are blind to the influence and importance of parties in the workings of political institutions, but rather because the material is so elusive, and the subject so complicated, that few have ventured to deal with it to any degree of fullness. Then, too, a foreign observer is at an evident disadvantage in the study of a topic like this. One cannot, perhaps, affirm that Mr. Lowell has made no mistakes whatever in this portion of his work; for it is beyond reason to expect that a native might not detect errors of judgment or even in statements of fact in the accounts and discussions of the well-nigh

numberless political parties that are to be found in most of the countries dealt with in this book. So far, however, as the reviewer's personal observations in some of these countries go, Mr. Lowell is remarkably free from both kinds of errors.

France, Italy, the German Empire, Austria-Hungary and Switzerland are the states treated. In the case of each there is a good exposition of constitutional provisions, together with sufficient historical elucidation to make clear how present conditions came into being. This part of the work does not call for special notice, because, although it is done remarkably well, and with excellent sense of proportion, and in some respects corrects mistakes into which others have fallen, at the same time it is not the real addition to political science which the book makes; for herein Mr. Lowell is not traversing new ground. The positive contribution is in the history and discussion of political parties; but before referring to this feature it may be well to touch briefly upon a few of the general characteristics of the work.

The book is not a mere description but it is an acute criticism of institutions; broad views, apt comparisons, especially with England and the United States, everywhere abound. The style is so straightforward and intelligible that one is never obliged to re-read a sentence to get at its meaning; nor on the other hand, have scientific accuracy and thoroughgoing analysis been sacrificed in order to secure clearness. On every page the author shows a mastery of his subject, which enables him to make the subject clear to others.

Mr. Lowell also brings out more plainly than others have done the part played by the courts in the institutions of the countries studied. The importance of the courts in our own system is well enough understood, but we are apt to overlook or underestimate their influence in continental European states; the author as a lawyer has recognized the part they play and by his treatment of this topic has helped to complete our knowledge of public law where others have left the gap. But Mr. Lowell is far more than a lawyer, in this and in all other features of his book; he is a philosophical student, with a large knowledge of history and of the principles of government, as his various writings heretofore have amply demonstrated.

Turning our attention now to those portions of the work devoted to political parties, the reader should at the outset be warned that a review of this feature of the book can give but a very inadequate and imperfect notion of the abundant research made by the author in order to render his treatment of this subject as complete as possible.

In France, the first country taken up, one is immediately struck by the large number of parties and factions or groups. This is due principally to the fact that in France, quite contrary to the normal

rule, parties divide on the form of the government as well as on its powers and duties; this is why party successes, real party successes, have been followed by the overturn of existing institutions and the establishment of a new style of government and of a new constitution, as witnessed by the numerous revolutions of the last hundred years, since the parties are not striving to better existing conditions but to introduce an entirely new order of things. On this basis there are or have been four principal parties in France—Legitimist, Orleanist, Imperialist, and Republican. These parties, however, have not maintained themselves intact; this is especially true of the Republican party, which, since 1871, has been split up into more wings and combinations than one can easily remember. Such a state of affairs has acted disastrously on the cabinet system of government, a borrowed institution which probably would have worked badly any how, but which under existing party conditions has been maintained with the greatest difficulty. The situation may be described briefly by stating that in the last twenty-five years France has had six times as many prime ministers as England in the same length of time, and more changes of ministry in that period than England since the close of our Revolutionary War. This lack of party cohesion may be largely due to the absence of national party organizations, since each candidate for the Chamber of Deputies, issues his own platform of professions and principles, and individualism reigns supreme. These and other factors help to maintain groups and factions, and produce weak and short-lived cabinets. It ought to be added, however, that the frequency of ministerial changes is more apparent than real, partly for the reason that nowadays a change of ministry does not mean a change of party, but only at most a shuffling of the groups represented in the cabinet, and partly because it often happens that a majority of the new cabinet hold over from the old. Even with all these allowances, instability and impotence are the distinguishing characteristics of the French system of responsible government.

In Germany there is a still larger number of distinct parties than in France, though a smaller number of groups within parties. That German unity is not yet completely attained is evidenced by the fact that certain party factions are founded on a race basis, such as the Poles, Danes, Alsace-Lorrainers, and Guelphs. In addition, numerous shades and degrees exist among conservatives, liberals and radicals. The most interesting and possibly the most dangerous party is the Social-Democratic, whose fortunes have almost constantly improved in spite of repressive legislation; this party now casts the largest popular vote, though the system of representation places it fourth in number of members in the Reichstag. Its opportunities for good or

ill are not so great in the empire as they would be in the individual states, but in them it chooses few or no legislative members owing to the methods of voting which have been adopted. This confusion of parties is not so serious as it would be if Germany had the cabinet system of government. That system operates poorly enough in France, but there it is always possible to combine, for a time at least, a certain number of groups of the same, that is the Republican, party; whereas in Germany it would be almost out of the question to rely upon bringing together several distinct parties, for although the thing has been done once or twice, it is doubtful if it could always be accomplished.

In the three remaining countries, Austria-Hungary, Italy and Switzerland, we are confronted by a similar lack of well-organized parties. In Austria proper, more generally than in Germany, parties are based on race, which plays an exceptionally large part in the whole system of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, but is especially marked in the Austrian portion. Of Austria-Hungary as a whole Mr. Lowell aptly remarks: "If France has been a laboratory for political experiments, Austria-Hungary is a museum of political curiosities." The state of parties is only one of many striking features. In Italy and Switzerland party chaos prevails to a greater or less extent. Thus in the five countries under consideration, though for different reasons in each, groups and factions are the rule; in none of them does the division into two parties exist.

Several other topics of special importance demand a brief notice. The work contains a short but most instructive discussion of the position of the church and of its relations to the state in Italy; a suggestive study of the nature of the federal government, a discriminating analysis of the powers of the Bundesrath in the German empire; a lucid exposition of the system of local government in Prussia, and adequate accounts of the governments of Prussia and of the minor German states. As for Switzerland, it seems to be the fashion to advocate the introduction into the United States of this or that feature of the Swiss system, but in particular the Swiss form of the referendum, on the theory, apparently, that what has worked well in the one federal republic will work equally satisfactorily in the other. Mr. Lowell holds no brief for either side, but sets forth impartially the strength and the weakness of Swiss practices, and likewise indicates points of contrast between the United States and Switzerland, differences which might seriously interfere with the successful application of Swiss experience to American conditions. It might be added that a statement of the results of referendums held as late as October, 1896, shows how nearly down to date the book is brought. An appendix

contains the constitutions of France, Italy, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Switzerland, printed in the original languages, in the case of Switzerland the French text being selected.

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The Nicaragua Canal, The Gateway between the Oceans. By WILLIAM L. MERRY. Pp. 46. Published by Authority of the Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco, the Board of Trade of San Francisco, the Chamber of Commerce of Portland, Oregon, the Chamber of Commerce of San Diego. San Francisco, 1895.

Nicaragua, the War of the Filibusters, by Judge DANIEL B. LUCAS; With Introductory Chapter by Hon. Lewis Baker; and *The Nicaragua Canal*, by Hon. W. A. MACCORKLE; and *The Monroe Doctrine*, by J. FAIRFAX MCLAUGHLIN, LL. D. Pp. 216. Price, \$1.50. Richmond, Va.: B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, 1896.

Mr. Merry has had such an extended personal experience in the commercial affairs of the isthmian republics, and with their trade relations with the United States, that his present monograph on the Nicaragua Canal, published by the boards of trade and chambers of commerce of our Western seaboard cities, should receive careful attention by all those interested in the future industrial development of our country.

The Nicaragua Canal is indeed, as the author says, a "commercial necessity" to the United States, and in presenting the demands of the Pacific slope Mr. Merry does much to pierce the enveloping veil of past and present trade relations which still continues to obscure our commercial future. The construction of an isthmus waterway will, according to the author, be of immense benefit to the West, and, he adds, the canal itself "will rapidly develop the resources and increase the population of all Central America." The predictions thus offered are supported by an array of facts and figures, and the author's personal experience with the countries he describes lends especial weight to his prophecies.

A bird's-eye description of Nicaragua is given in the pamphlet, and this is followed by a brief outline of the history of isthmus transit. Owing to the date of publication, Mr. Merry was obliged to rely on the data of the present canal company in his description of the construction plans of the canal. The report of the Canal Board, which has since been published, shows us, however, that these earlier data are insufficient; and until further technical investigations are undertaken no accurate and detailed description of the canal route can be